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Motorcycle Clothing and Weather Protection

When riding mopeds or motorcycles it is always very important that you wear the correct protective clothing in order to protect you from the weather and also to help other road users to see you.

Importance of protective clothing

Without the right clothing you can get very cold and wet when riding a motorcycle.

Special motorcycling clothing is available which:

- protects you from the weather
- helps to protect you from some types of injury
- helps other road users to see you

You should also consider using the following items of clothing when riding a motorcycle:

- visors or goggles
- gloves and gauntlets
- protective clothing
- boots
- visibility aids

Safety helmets

By law you must wear a safety helmet when riding a motorcycle on the road.

All helmets sold in the UK must either:

- comply with British Standard BS 6658:1985 and carry the BSI kitemark
- comply with UNECE Regulation 22.05
- comply with any standard accepted by a member of the European Economic Area which offers a level of safety and protection equivalent to BS 6658:1985 and carry a mark equivalent to the BSI kitemark.





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Damage to helmets

If your helmet receives any serious impact you should always buy a new one. Damage won't always be visible to the naked eye. For this reason you should never buy a second-hand helmet.

Visors and goggles

A visor or goggles are vital to protect your eyes from wind, rain, insects and road dirt. All visors or goggles must comply with a British Standard and display a BSI kitemark, or they must comply with a European standard which offers a level of safety and protection at least equivalent to the British Standard and carry a mark equivalent to the BSI kitemark (ECE 22-05).

If you need glasses or contact lenses to read a numberplate at the prescribed distance then you must wear your glasses or contact lenses when you ride. You should not wear tinted glasses, visors or goggles if you are riding in the dark or conditions of poor visibility.

It is very important that you keep your visor or goggles clean. You must have a clear view of the road ahead at all times. To clean your goggles or visor wash them with warm soapy water. Do not use solvents or petrol.

Protective clothing

Motorcycle clothing is of two main types:

- clothing made from man-made materials
- leather clothing

When you are choosing protective motorcycle clothing make sure you look for additional protection for the shoulders, elbows and knees.

Gloves and gauntlets

Good gloves or gauntlets are essential when you ride a motorcycle. Never be tempted to ride without gloves. If you fall off you could seriously injure your hands.

Motorcycle boots

It is important to wear good boots or footwear when you ride a motorcycle. If you wear sandals or trainers your feet will have little protection if you fall off.





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Riding in cold weather

When riding in very cold weather your hands and feet can become painfully cold. No matter how good your gloves or boots, the cold will eventually get through.

If you're serious about motorcycling in cold weather you should consider buying electrically heated inner gloves or electrically heated handlebar grips. However, these accessories put a large demand on your motorcycle's electrical generator so you should check that it can cope with the extra demands before you buy and fit them.

Visibility aids for motorcyclists

Many road accidents involving motorcyclists occur because another road user didn't see them. Using some form of visibility aid will help others to see you.

Remember: YOU need to be visible from the side as well as the front and the back.

Wearing fluorescent orange or yellow clothing in daylight will improve your chances of being seen.

Other methods you could use to help other road users to see you in daylight include:

- wearing a white helmet
- wearing brightly coloured clothing
- riding with your headlamp on dipped beam

To improve visibility in the dark you need to wear reflective material. They work by reflecting the light from headlamps of other vehicles. This makes you much more visible from a long distance away.

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